



NATURAL RESOURCES DEFENSE COUNCIL

August 3, 2010

The Honorable Jared Huffman, Chair
Assembly Water Parks and Wildlife Committee
1020 N Street, Suite 160
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: **AB 2092 – (Huffman) – Support**

Dear Chairman Huffman,

On behalf of NRDC's 250,000 California members and activists, I am writing in support of AB 2092, which is intended to resolve key financing questions essential to the success of the water reform package approved by the legislature last November. As you know, NRDC was deeply involved in the development and passage of that package. However, the success of this new effort will be determined to a great extent by whether or not the newly-created agencies and the implementation of the required Delta Plan are supported by a credible short and long-term financing plan.

Resolving financing issues is a critical piece of unfinished business from last year. As you know, one of the reasons the CALFED Bay-Delta Program failed was its inability to develop a credible financing plan. The challenges in the Delta have grown since the CALFED ROD was finalized, and the likelihood of long-term, stable public funding for an ambitious Delta and water program is lower than it appeared in 2000. As a result, no Delta Plan will succeed without a detailed financing plan based on an ambitious "beneficiary pays" approach.

Although we support the creation of a short-term fee to help finance the start up period of the Delta Stewardship Council, we recognize that creating such a mechanism was not possible in this legislation at this time. We would like to thank you for working diligently to respond to the recommendations offered by NRDC and many other stakeholder groups. The resulting product is a strong bill with stronger support. Most importantly, this bill will help the newly created Delta Stewardship Council succeed in writing and implementing a comprehensive plan. California has a great deal at stake. We are pleased to change our position from "support and amend" to an unqualified position of support.

We appreciate your leadership on the policy reform package last year and thank you for your efforts to resolve these essential outstanding financing issues. We stand ready to work with you to pass AB 2092.

Sincerely,

Barry Nelson
Senior Policy Analyst